

**MINUTES of the FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE meeting held at
Felixstowe Town Hall on Wednesday 29 May 2019 at 7.30pm**

PRESENT: Cllr S Gallant (Chairman)
Cllr M Richardson (Vice-Chairman) Cllr D Savage
Cllr N Barber Cllr A Smith
Cllr S Bird Cllr S Wiles
Cllr M Deacon Cllr K Williams

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)
Mrs D Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)

28. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none.

29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member(s)	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Cllr S Bird Cllr M Deacon Cllr S Gallant Cllr S Wiles	All	Local Non-Pecuniary (as Members of Suffolk Coastal District Council)
Cllr S Bird Cllr S Wiles	All	Local Non-Pecuniary (as a Members of Suffolk County Council)

As no Pecuniary declarations were made, there were no requests for dispensation.

31. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 27 March 2019 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

32. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2019

Members considered the final Internal Audit Report for the year 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019.

RESOLVED that:

- i. the Internal Audit Report for the year 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019 be received and noted;**
- ii. the recommendation regarding the use of the General Power of Competence be noted; and,**
- iii. it be noted that the recommendation regarding the nominated Councillor signing the bank statement rather than the Omega bank reconciliation had been actioned.**

33. REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT EFFECTIVENESS

Committee reviewed the arrangements for, and effectiveness of, Council's internal audit.

Members considered the good service received from the SALC-appointed auditor and the benefit of an internal auditor with experience of working within the town council sector. It was proposed that the arrangement be recommended to continue on the same basis for 2019/20.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council that:

- i. having reviewed the effectiveness of its internal audit, it be resolved that Council considers the arrangements to be effective; and,**
- ii. in being satisfied of the independence and competence of its internal auditor, Mr Colin Poole of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils be appointed to continue as the Council's internal auditor, undertaking a half-yearly and year-end audit on the basis of paras 4.14-4.17 of the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner's Guide 2019".**

34. ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1 APRIL 2018 – 31 MARCH 2019

Committee received the accounts report for the financial year 1 April 2018 - 31 March 2019. A report of any variance to budget estimates for the period greater than 10% or £500 was also received, alongside a report on Balances and Reserves. It was noted that the Annual Return for the financial year 2018-19 had been prepared based on the figures given and would be submitted to Council for approval in June.

Members noted that there was £3,680 remaining in the Armed Forces Weekend Legacy Fund and requested that a reminder is sent out to local cadet forces and other appropriate organisations regarding the fund availability.

RESOLVED that the accounts to 31 March 2019 and the Council's financial position as at year end 2018/19 be noted, with no other action required at this time.

35. BUDGET MONITORING TO 30 APRIL 2019

Committee received the budget monitoring report to 30 April 2019. A report of any variance to budget estimates for the period greater than 10% or £500 was considered.

Members noted that, due to a beneficial outcome in the cost of insurance provision for 2019/20 there would be an underspend in this area. The Clerk advised that he would bring to Committee's attention in September any pressure in other areas of the Council's budget which could be supported by this underspend.

RESOLVED that the budget monitoring report to 30 April 2019 be approved, with no other action required at this time.

36. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

Committee noted the requirement of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 for Council to ensure that it has a sound system of internal control.

It was noted that, other than non-material updates, no changes were proposed to the Council's Statement of Internal Control from the previous year.

Following consideration of the Council's policy and internal control statement document it was proposed that it be recommended to Council for approval and adoption with no further changes.

It was RESOLVED that the Internal Control Statement for the year ending 31 March 2020 be recommended to Council for formal adoption as presented.

37. BUSINESS PLAN 2020-2024

Committee considered its approach for the development of the Town Council's Business Plan for 2020-24. The Clerk advised that the Committee would be working towards the recommendation of a draft Business Plan to Council in March 2020. Following a discussion, it was agreed that a small steering group should be formed to scope and oversee an inclusive process involving all Council Members.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Cllr M Deacon, be delegated the authority to create a small steering group of Members to scope and oversee the process of developing a draft Business Plan 2020-24, reporting back to Committee in due course.

38. WORKS TO TREES AT FERRY ROAD

Committee considered a report on the intention by Generator Optima (Ferry Road) Ltd. to prune branches on trees situated on land owned by the Council at Ferry Road, which were overhanging the boundary with their housing development site. The Clerk advised that, due to works being anticipated to start on 3rd June, this was being brought to the Finance & Governance Committee for expediency with any decisions to be reported to the next Assets and Services Committee.

Members agreed to accept the offer to extend the pruning work to minimise unbalancing the trees insofar as may be possible. It was noted that the cost of these works would be met by Generator Optima (Ferry Road) Ltd.

It was RESOLVED that the works to trees at Ferry Road be approved to be carried out by the qualified contractor a by Generator Optima (Ferry Road) Ltd.

39. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 8.10pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for Wednesday 17 July 2019 at 7.30pm.

Date: _____

Chairman: _____